DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 160 603 SP 013 179

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TITLE From a Campus Laboratory School to an R and D Center.
PUB DATE 78
NOTE 12p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Curriculum Design; *Curriculum Development; *Curriculum Research; *Curriculum Study Centers; Elementary Secondary Education; Experimental Programs; *Laboratory Schools; *Organizational Change; *Program Descriptions
IDENTIFIERS Hawaii

ABSTRACT

Reviewed in this document are the University of Hawaii's reorganization of its Laboratory School and the resulting program which focuses on curriculum research and development rather than preservice teacher training. The history behind the change, and specific changes in school organization, size and composition of school population, faculty organization and staff roles, and school curriculum and scheduling, are reviewed. The result of the restructuring--a special-purpose comprehensive school for preschool through grade 12 students offering an experimental program of study enriched by new curricula--and the new functions of the program are examined. (DS)

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FROM A CAMPUS LABORATORY SCHOOL TO AN R & D CENTER

When most people think of Hawaii their minds turn to sun, surf, palm trees, and hula girls, -- in short to a tropical paradise. True, we have much beauty surrounding our island state. The island style of living is unique. It is the melting pot of the Pacific. Our schools and local culture reflect many religious, ethnic, and socio-economic groupings.

Hawaii is a rather small state with less than a million population, and a public school enrollment of about 176,000.

Unlike other states, Hawaii has one Superintendent of Schools at the state level and several subordinate administrators at the local level, distributed throughout the 5 major islands. The University of Hawaii's College of Education has a strong commitment to support the State Department of Education and has emphasized support to schools in a variety of formats. The use of the Laboratory School in curriculum research and development is one of those formats.

In my speech today, I would like to tell you about Laboratory School's efforts in systematic curriculum research and development, with emphasis on the role of the school itself. I will not try to speak on the very critical areas of teacher training, curriculum material design, dissemination and installation or evaluation, but rather the changes that had to be implementated to affect the transition of the school from a pre-service teacher training support institution to a laboratory school which has become an intergral part of a curriculum research and development activity in Hawaii. Our model of action may not necessarily be transported and replicated elsewhere. Yet, we have challenged assumptions that have been common and learned a number of things which I would like to share with you.

SP013 129

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HISTORY OF SYSTEMATIC CURRICULUM R & D IN HAWAII

As many of us recall, in the early 60's, many lab schools across the country suffered a crisis of role and confidence. Some still are. The value of continuing them on University campuses came under question with the result that a number of schools were closed down and others were reduced in size. Some retained their pre-service teacher training function and others changed their function completely. The University Laboratory School in Hawaii suffered a similar crisis.

A study of the entire College of Education in 1965-66, directed by Lindley J. Stiles, then Dean of the University of Wisconsin, recommended that the three university schools (pre-school/primary, elementary and high school) be converted from teacher training facilities to a center for curriculum research, development and experimentation, preferably in support of change efforts in the Hawaii State school system, stemming from the advent of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The teacher training program was phased out over a period of two years and new curriculum research and development activities were defined to reflect its new character as the University's primary site for organized curriculum research and development. With the changeover, the University Laboratory School became a division of the Curriculum Research and Development Group (CRDG). A new person from outside the school, someone with strong commitments to the new function, was appointed Director of CRDG and head of the school. This man was Dr. Arthur King, Jr. who has been with CRDG since its inception in 1965. Some of you might know him. He came to Hawaii from Claremont Graduate School, where he was Director of Teacher Training and a Professor in Curriculum and Administration. He had just published a book with a co-worker from Claremont, Dr. Jack Brownell, entitled, The Curriculum and the Disciplines of Knowledge: A Theory of Curriculum Practice. The theory set forth in the book

was a derivative of the Bruner, Schwab, and Phoenix thinking of the early sixties and has, to a large degree, guided the curriculum theory of CRDG and the Laboratory School. The theory "asserted" in the book was the significance of the disciplines of knowledge as a productive way of entering into the problems of curriculum theory and the practical processes of curriculum change. The heart of the theory lies in its definition of what intellectual activity is like. The intellectual realm, constituting man's use of symbols, is held to be the basis for liberal and general education. Intellectual life is established to be a set of semi-independent disciplines or communities of individuals who share a common dialogue.

The theory emphasizes the "community of discourse" among scholars, teachers and students with the curriculum itself as part of the discourse . . .

In applying this theoretical stance, a number of things began to happen when CRDG was created. The first effect of the theoretical work already completed, was to greatly crystallize the thinking about the art of educational change at CRDG.

Secondly, the theory gave a rallying point around which to gather scholars and teachers.

Thirdly, the stance gave a basis for staffing CRDG, which had to be created from the staff of the Laboratory School.

Fourthly, the use of the theory resulted in a definite approach to the design and development of curricula.

The fifth result of the theoretic stance can be seen in the development of a laboratory school as an integral part of the R & D Center. The school was to act as an incubator for new ideas, a genuine laboratory for early testing of innovative ideas and curricula.

In addition a school curriculum was to be designed to test the theory that every student can and should engage in continuous interaction with major

intellectual areas throughout an entire school career.

CHANGES MADE IN THE LABORATORY SCHOOL

In order to reflect the new functions of CRDG, many changes had to be made in the school. The problems of transition were numerous, and they were not lessened in the emotional climate generated by a decision which was not popular with some of the staff. Changes were made in (1) school organization, (2) school size, (3) pupil composition, (4) role of the teaching staff, (5) school curriculum and (6) school scheduling.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION. The first major task was to combine the preschool, elementary (Grades K-6), and high school (Grades 7-12) under a single administration. The day-to-day operation of the school was assigned to an administrator, who would be responsible to the Director. The tighter single administration has not only resulted in greater efficiency and better coordination of the school's curriculum and schedule for Grades K-12; it has also served to focus more sharply on curriculum development and, at the same time, keep the essential balance between the research function and the function of providing quality education for the students.

SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF SCHOOL POPULATION. The student population was reduced in gradual stages in order to release staff, dollar resources, and school facilities for research and development activities. The pupil population has decreased in size from 1,100 to approximately 400, preschool to Grade 12. This reduction over the years has made possible the gradual expansion of the research and development staff.

A deliberate alteration was made in the composition of the student population to make it more representative of students in the public schools. Students are selected from nominations sent in from the schools. Today, the school maintains an ethnic balance representative of the State's school population.

Last year the student population at the Lab School reflected an enrollment of 24% Japanese, 23% Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian, 22% Caucasian, 5% Chinese, 3% Samoan, 2% Filipino, 1% Korean, 1% Black, 13% mixed non-Hawaiian, and 3% other Pacific and Asian students.

There is a wide distribution of socio-economic levels. Last year, 39% of the children in the Lab School came from families of the semi-professional, clerical, service and technician occupations, 25% with parents in the professional category, 19% in the laborer (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled) category, 9% unemployed and 6% other (student, retired, etc.).

Finally there is a wide range of intellectual performance in each class. Students vary from very low school achievement all the way to National Merit finalists. Under present policies, the school also enrolls pupils with special needed characteristics for the purpose of testing curricula. For example, during the development of the Hawaii Music Program, pupils with special aptitudes and experiences in instrumental and vocal music were admitted.

FACULTY ORGANIZATION AND STAFF ROLES. Another early change was the organization of the school into faculties of English, Science, Social Studies, Math, Art, Music, Second Language, and Physical Education. Each faculty was given the responsibility for overseeing the entire curriculum from kindergarten to grade twelve. Each faculty is headed by a department chairman, who, in most instances, is the head of research and development in that subject field. This plan has resulted in better articulation and continuity of each curriculum area and the articulation of research and demonstration with the school. It also has the advantage of facilitating the assignment of teachers up and down the grade levels, adding to the richness of the school's instructional resources. It is not unusual for a faculty member of professional rank to teach a fourth-grade class, or for another to teach third-grade math and tenth-grade geometry.

Perhaps the most difficult change to establish was the concept of dual roles

for the staff. As members of the original staff left to go into other roles in education, they were often replaced by senior educators who could both teach and work on curriculum development. Other younger teachers with curriculum ideas and inventive ability were recruited and encouraged to try out new ideas on a small scale or join a development project on a part-time basis. Over the years they have developed the R & D skills on the job. The young junior developer is now making an excellent creative contribution to the entire R & D effort. The on-the-job training, working with senior scholars, has worked quite well at the Lab School.

Today, all staff in some way relate to the R & D function of the school and are actively involved with the consumers of their products--children. The school is unique in the proportion of staff who divide their time teaching one or two periods a day and devoting the rest of their time to curriculum development and research. It is not uncommon for a senior project director to teach a class, or for a teacher-developer to test newly-created project materials in the classroom. Staff offices are spread throughout the campus, putting project staff in close daily contact with students. It is very strongly believed that the developers and writers should not be separated from the school situation.

Hawaii's experience with this way of bringing about curriculum change is now 11 years old. During this period, CRDG has engaged in fifteen major statewide projects and a lesser number of minor ones. CRDG basically provides curriculum services in three different ways:

1) by supporting curriculum materials developed by the State Department of Education (DOE);

2) by accepting contract work initiated by the State Department of Education; and

3) by initiating and developing curriculum materials originating from CRDG itself.

The output by number of completed projects has been considerable, but rather more unusual is Hawaii's high user rates of these products. By user rates I mean the number of students using the project materials that are developed for their grade level, based on the entire public school population in Hawaii.

In category number one, CRDG has given support to two large projects. The first is the Hawaii English Program (K-6) which has a user rate of about 50% of the students in the schools or about 50,000 students. The second project is the Artist-in-the-Schools Program with about a 90% user rate or approximately 123,000 students in grades K-12.

There are three projects in the second category, that is work which is contracted to CRDG from the Department of Education. The largest is the Hawaii English Program-Secondary (Grades 7-12) with approximately a 90% user rate. Two other projects were begun in 1976 and it is too early to determine their user rates as they are still in the pilot testing phases. They are the Multicultural Awareness Project for grades 4-9 and the Consumer Education Project for grades K-12.

There are nine projects that have been initiated and developed by CRDG. The three largest and oldest projects are: 1) Foundational Approaches in Science Teaching, begun in 1966 (Grades 6-10) which has a user rate of about 65% or about 10,250 students; 2) the Japanese Language and Culture Program, begun in 1971 for grades 3-12 has a user rate of about 80% or 7,000 Japanese language students; and 3) begun in 1966, the Comprehensive Musicianship Program (K-12) is now nationally published by Addison-Wesley with a 45% user rate in Hawaii, or about 35,000 students. The fourth project was the Metric Math Project (K-6) mandated by the Hawaii State Legislature. There is a 27% user rate or 25,000 students this year in the program.

The remaining 5 projects are in various stages of development and testing. They include the Pre-School Teacher Development Program begun in 1973; the Interme-

diate Mathematics Program (Grades 7 & 8) begun in 1971; the Nature Study Program (K-6) begun in 1974; and the Marine Science (Grades 10-12) and Marine Social Studies (Grades 11 & 12) Programs begun in 1975.

All of the above programs have been used in the Lab School, especially in the early design and test stages of the program. The Lab School has provided the developers and evaluators with a long-term look at the curriculum before it ever goes out into the field. The Lab School students in some cases are three years into the program before students in other schools even get the pilot program. It is believed that without this much trial in the Lab School the projects would not be as successful as they are. The moving of experimental materials in and out of a curriculum calls for a great deal of flexibility on the part of the school. A regular school cannot change fast or drastically enough to accommodate the needs of curriculum developers, therefore the Lab School's setting seems an ideal place to test new materials.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM. The curriculum for students took a new direction to reflect the curriculum theories guiding the research and development activity. The earlier emphasis on sets of short, elective courses was discontinued in favor of a general model that would give students a better balance of courses in the sciences, arts and humanities each year, as well as developmental continuity in these same areas from year to year.

For the past seven years, the school has been testing the curriculum theory, mentioned earlier, that every student can and should engage in continuous interaction with major intellectual areas throughout an entire school career. Put into practice, this theory has a profound impact on the opportunity students have to learn in school.

Most students, following conventional patterns, will not engage in a rigorous, well-rounded academic school program. Minimum requirements become the maximum for all too many. All students at the Lab School are strongly encouraged

to enroll in eight subject areas throughout their years in school. Therefore, the maximum requirements become the minimum. Once the student knows that this is the expectation of the school and all students are engaged in this type of learning experience, they too become active participants. This year 97% of the student body is enrolled in Art; 100% in English; 88% in Second Language; 100% in Music; 96% in Science; 94% in Mathematics; 100% in Social Studies and 91% in Physical Education courses. The majority of students in the school take nine courses.

There is a variety of courses to choose from within the recommended subject areas. Students interested in Art have the option of taking Art History, Weaving and Textiles, Jewelry, Drawing and Painting, Sculpture, or Ceramics. In Music, besides Concert Vocal, Band or Strings Orchestra, (which is a requirement) students may select Stage Band, Pops Orchestra, Vocal, Wind or Strings Ensemble. In the creative arts students may choose from Drama, Modern Dance, Guitar, or Polynesian Dance. There is a total of 68 different courses offered in Grades 7-12, with 87 sections for 290 students with a range in class size of 10 to 69.

Students are also encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities, such as Drama, Speech, and Athletics. About 60% of the boys and girls in grades 9-12 participate in athletics, some of them in two or three sports.

The elementary students are subject to the same broad, fundamental program. It is intended that students will stay at the Laboratory School over a long period of time so that the effects of this theory of curriculum may be analyzed. Practically all students once admitted to the Laboratory School stay until graduation.

SCHOOL SCHEDULING. The Laboratory School has had its share of experiments with schedules. Modular scheduling was tried earlier, refined, and rather quickly discarded in favor of a schedule that used a combination of many scheduling

techniques.

The development of a model schedule that will meet the demands of a K-12 curriculum remains a challenge, and schedules are being tested and improved every year. An excellent general model which permits students to take 9 or 10 courses, has been developed at the school; it permits no major scheduling conflicts. Using this model, students in grades 7-12 are in class from 8:00-3:30 every day--with a 30-minute lunch period. Although the model was developed in a small school, it can be adapted for a large school setting.

FUNCTIONS

The many changes made in the Lab School since 1966 have enabled it to assume its research and development role more effectively. Its functions have become more firmly defined into five main categories, which are to provide: (1) a stimulating environment for low-cost explorations of promising curriculum ideas; (2) an optimal setting for organized large-scale development; (3) a demonstration site for working curriculum models of various kinds, open to visitors from Hawaii and elsewhere; (4) a place for curriculum dialogue, for workshops, seminars and conferences; and (5) a school which provides a quality education program for all students enrolled.

Parents of students attending the Laboratory School are aware of the experimental school environment. Students participate actively in the testing and demonstration of new curriculum models of school scheduling, classroom management, and practical applications of learning theories. The students become quite used to the many visitors in the school and their unique role as students in a laboratory setting.

CONCLUSION

Today, the University Laboratory School has made the transition from a pre-service teacher training institution to an R & D Center. It is firmly

established as a special-purpose public school under the administration of the University of Hawaii. It is a comprehensive school for students, preschool to grade 12, offering an experimental program of study, enriched by new curricula being developed at the Center. It has the unique functions of research, development, and extensive in-service teacher training to support the installation of new programs in the schools of the State of Hawaii. The Laboratory School is an essential and vital part of the curriculum development effort. It is a place where bold ventures in curriculum design can be conceptualized, worked on, developed, and disseminated. It is a place that weaves together the reality of school with the theory of the curriculum researcher.